

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested.

During the preparation of the present Response, the Applicants discovered some discrepancies within the current Final Office Action regarding the claims the Examiner found to include patentable subject matter. On January 13, 2009, the undersigned participated in a telephone conference with the Examiner. During that conference, the Examiner indicated that paragraph 17 of the current Office Action is correct with the addition of claim 131.

Therefore, the Examiner has indicated orally and through the current Final Office Action that claims 113-114, 120, 122, 124-127, 131, 133-138 and 141-142 stand objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In an effort to move this application to issuance, Applicants have elected to place claims 113, 122 and 124 in independent form by separately adding base claim 109. Claim 114 now depends on independent claim 113 and claims 125-127 now depend on independent claim 124. Claim 120 has been amended to be in independent form by adding base claim 109 and intervening claim 119.

Claim 131 has been amended to be in independent form by adding base claim 128 and intervening claim 130. Similarly, Applicants have elected to place claims 133 and 134 in independent form by separately adding base claim 128. Claim 135 now depends directly on independent claim 134, while claims 136-138 depend on dependent claim 135. Claim 141 has also been amended to place it in independent form by adding base claim 139. Claim 142 now depends on independent claim 141.

With regard to currently amended claims, an effort has been made to retain all of the recited elements and features of the base and intervening claims as set forth in the previous response. In some instances, minor formatting changes were made to the previously submitted base and intervening claims. If the Examiner believes that anything has been inadvertently omitted or if other phrasing is preferred, the undersigned attorney of record should be contacted in the hope of expediting the resolution of any such issues and the allowance of this application.

All other claims have been canceled and thus entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate the allowability of claims 113-114, 120, 122, 124-127, 131, 133-138 and 141-142. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to resolve any outstanding matters concerning the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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